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# UNCROWDED PLACES

—An Appeal  
for the Frontier



Sleigh Loaded with United Church Relief,  
Notikewin, Peace River.

Issued by  
The Board of Home Missions  
of  
The United Church of Canada.

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## A RECRUIT SAYS "GOOD-DAY" TO THE FRONTIER

Writing from one of the new gold-mining camps a student says:—

I'm here! My first Sunday is drawing to a close and I am sitting on the floor of my tent, a lamp beside me, the mosquitoes having a feed, the moon shining through the window of my tent, the beautiful lake 40 feet away, and the store and boarding-house lights showing across the bay. Music comes stealing across the water. It is a perfect night with the tent in a perfect setting, on the edge of the forest in a clump of pines and poplars.

Sunday in camp is really only another week day. Some men have been logging at my back door all day; some were drawing lumber; others were building houses (16 have gone up the last two weeks or so); the Kenty mine, three-quarter mile walk back through the forest, is running day and night. But they are only waiting for the church, and then I believe we can make Sunday different. Already such remarks have been made as: "It will be good to hear the name of God again," "We need a rest," etc.

To-night we had service in the store. A Mr. Martin manages it, and he is great! Yesterday he took me around to some of the homes and shops and made me acquainted. To-night he arranged the store, stopped business for our service, and after it was over took up a collection in a shoe-box. I did not mention a collection at all. It was all done by themselves. I asked him to be "treasurer," although he is a Roman Catholic. He will keep the money in the store. He is making me a

cot to sleep on, and is genuine through and through. (Pardon the writing, but my feet have gone to sleep sitting on them and my back feels broken, writing. Wish I could make a table or chair, but timber is as dear as gold. I have made a table and two stools out of limbs and slabs already.) Well, there were 24 packed in the log store. Almost half were R.C.'s, the rest chiefly Anglican and Greek Orthodox, and some who have not been in church for years, I am told. We had a sing-song of hymns at the first, and then a brief service with a 12-15 minute address. There was one gentleman from Hamilton and his wife, a surveyor, a college graduate—generally speaking all classes of people in regard to education, profession, language and race were in the group. The Greek Orthodox baker came; the tall bootlegger, a real smart fellow, was present, and gave us a big hand with the singing; the shoemaker was there, the family who run the boarding house, the management of the two stores, prospectors and several miners. Race species included Roumanians, Russians, French, and other New Canadians. We had a great time, and by the way they spoke afterwards and the way some of those "hard old" customers shook my hand, it looks as if they mean business and as if they will be good supporters.

It means that a fair majority of the town were out, because one-half of the miners were on night shift, and the fact that many others were away prospecting, makes me feel that I have a fair footing. A foreign girl who runs the barber shop at the back of the bake shop, in the corner of the same room, was not there, nor were a couple of families of Swedes, nor a family or two of French.

By the way, the organ "goes great." They say they can hear me practising a half mile up the bush, and as one old prospector says, "sure and I like it." Thanks! I played it to-night, but a Mrs. — plays the piano (at home) and says she is willing to try to help me with the hymns, although she doesn't know them. She lives down the trail a few hundred feet, and they have a nice bungalow with a stove, so I may do some of my cooking there, and incidentally some studying, as she said she would be glad if I spent some time there. There are seven women in camp, and I know four or five of them, and they are great support. Imagine me "going out for tea Tuesday evening?" Well, I am!

The hymn sheets are just the thing, and although the men don't know them they are learning them quickly. One said he only knew "Onward Christian Soldiers," and that was learned in the army.

## A VETERAN SAYS "GOOD-BYE" TO THE FRONTIER

**Writing after twenty-five years of frontier work an experienced missionary says:—**

"Nae man can tether time or tide"; and the period for service as a Home Missionary in the North is very limited. As you know, I leave here at the end of the Conference year.

"The flood of time is rolling on;  
We stand upon its brink, whilst they are gone  
To glide in peace down death's mysterious  
stream;

Have ye done well?"

This question, more or less, is always with me, sometimes hurting with its haunting per-

sistence—"Have ye done well?" I very much fear that the Episcopalian confession must be mine: of things done that ought not to have been done, and omissions when there ought to have been commissions. And yet, like Marlowe's Jew (in a different sense, of course), "Infinite riches in a little room," are mine. Riches of memory, the things that God hath wrought in this "Empire of the North," during the few years that I have been privileged to take part in the great enterprise of our United Church. Almost six years have passed since I first glimpsed the magnificent beauty of "the Peace," and arrived at the end of steel to make my way through some 20 odd miles of mud and mystery, to the old mission of ———. There was no welcome of any kind extended, except a handshake from a Roman Catholic who had mistaken me for a Priest, and said, "I hope, Father, you come to build a church for us." Well, churches have been built, not a few, since then, but not such that my friend would approve.

I recall my first Easter Sacramental Service. We had hired a hall for the occasion, but somebody blundered, and no preparation had been made. The night was wet, and we had to occupy the small building, shack-like and shack dimensioned, which was known as the United Church, for this important service. The building was crowded, many having to return home, not being able to obtain entrance. That was a memorable service. We received 27 adult members into full communion, among them a father and his four sons. No less gratifying was the first sacramental Easter Service, conducted in the commodious church at ———, at which 25 men and women entered into the fellowship of our Church.

I have not time at present to tell you of the achievements of our Church, and the great advance made during those few years of our Home Mission enterprise. I want to tell you of two definite decisions for Christ. A young man, scholarly and refined, who had drifted into an agnostic attitude during his University course, attended our services quite regularly. I had frequently spoken with him, prayed for him, and yearned for his life committal to Christ. I shall not soon forget the glistening eyes, the warm handclasp, and the fervor of the words in which was expressed the ardor of this young man's faith in Christ. He is now teaching school and finely influencing a class of lads to higher things. The other, politically Red, and contemplating leadership in that particular brand of political propaganda, has just recently decided that the Saviour he has accepted is the world's Hope. He is assured that economic, political and other maladjustments may be corrected, our material malady cured, and our misery removed by the acceptance of the Leadership of Jesus Christ. He is now an officer of the Church, and giving enthusiastic leadership here.

These are the things that enrich memory, and make the eventide of life glow with a glory not of this world.